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LIVABLE COMMUNITIES CASE STUDIES

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The Livable Communities Case Studies were developed by the GCCOG as a way to identify methods and strategies that can make communities attractive places for their residents to live and work. The three case studies contained in this report serve as examples of how the cities of the GCCOG can address commonly identified urban design issues in the region of Southeastern Los Angeles. They demonstrate methods of creating more livable communities through downtown revitalization (Artesia), reuse of industrial lands (Paramount), and streetscape enhancements to an arterial highway (Pico Rivera). Because these studies were intended only as a demonstration, the base information research for the case study report does not include the full public workshop and city staff input process that would typically be incorporated into a detailed planning document. The result is a general set of recommendations, in which other cities can find inspiration to realize their own potential for creating more livable communities. It is important to understand that each city represents a unique set of existing conditions that impact its specific urban design recommendations. This report is a starting point for the cities in the region to explore how quality urban design can improve the character of the built environment.

THE GATEWAY CITIES

One of the biggest issues facing the case study cities of Artesia, Paramount and Pico Rivera, and of relevance to all of the Gateway Cities, is the shift in land use caused by the changing regional economy. As large-scale manufacturing becomes less relevant to local economies (exemplified by the decline of aerospace industry in the Gateway Cities region), the conversion of post-industrial land becomes a key opportunity for these otherwise built-out metropolitan areas. Study and analysis of regional trends, as well as an understanding of what is important to the community, can help to direct the reuse of this land. New uses should support current and anticipated future trends in both the economics of land use and allocation, and support the retail, civic, and residential structure necessary to create "livable cities".

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ARTESIA

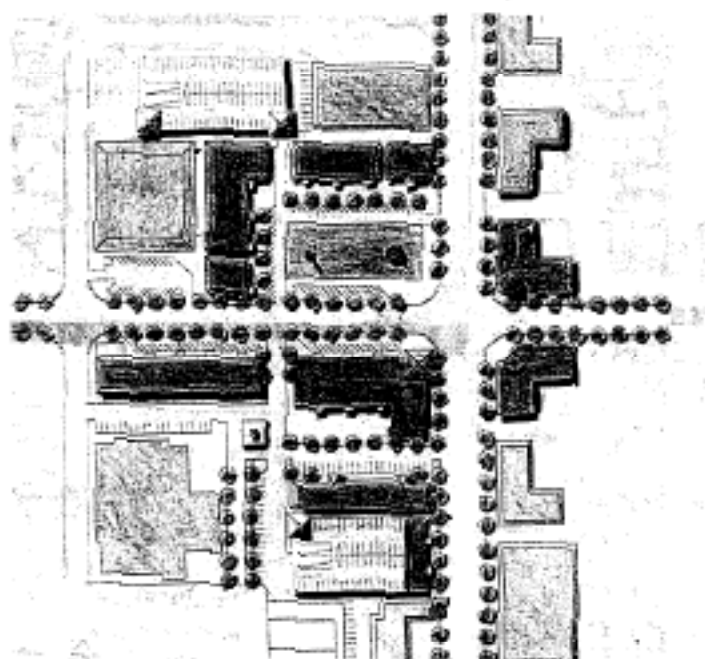


Revitalization of the existing downtown.

The City of Artesia is faced with a downtown structure that does not relate to its community. The town lacks a center for its residents, and while the existing retail core along Pioneer Boulevard is successful, it does not meet the civic and social needs of its citizens. Revitalization of an existing downtown requires a mix of uses that build on the City's current assets to create a vital city center, utilizing building form, architectural details and design guidelines to showcase the unique qualities of Artesia. In recognizing the need for a "gathering place" for the community, as well as an activity center that provides residents with the goods and services they require, the City has the opportunity to create a downtown core that is an activity center for its community. Efforts within Artesia's downtown should reflect the ideals of its population, and provide the community with a recognizable civic identity, a lively main street conducive to pedestrians, and a new activity center that serves all of its residents.



Creation of a new activity center.

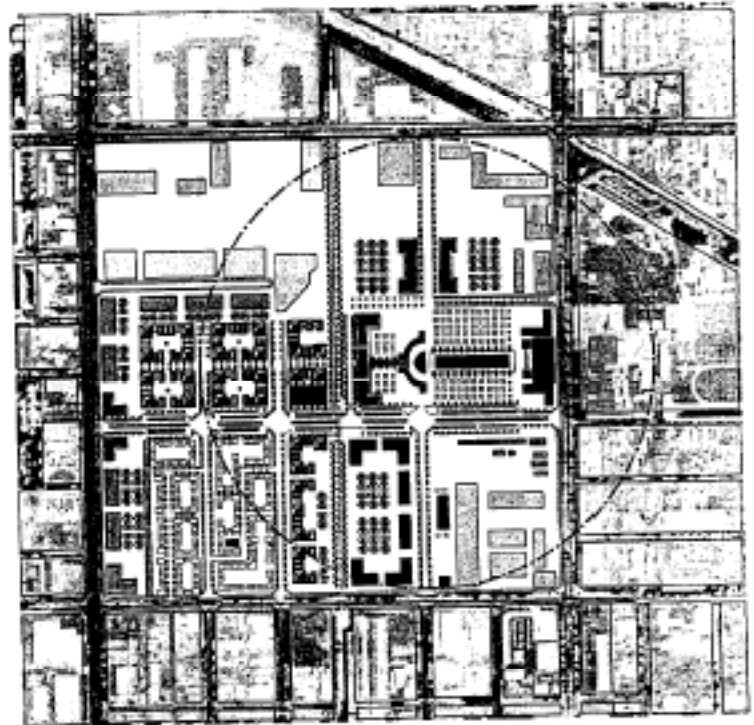


PARAMOUNT



Transit-oriented development.

Like many other cities in the GCCOG, the City of Paramount is experiencing a transition of land uses, particularly due to the shift in demand away from industrial land. This pattern of transition is resulting in districts that lack a clear sense of character and discernable nodes. The recommendations contained in the Reuse Study of Industrial Lands are intended to direct and focus redevelopment to create a clear hierarchy of district centers and edges. In the case of Paramount, it is particularly important to address the form and layout of redefined industrial parcels as it relates to the City's district nodes and major arterials. Redefining "districts" for the City, particularly edge-condition or transitional land use types, may require specification of housing and building prototypes, mixed-use and commercial build-out scenarios, and specific streetscape recommendations. Design guidelines that govern setbacks, building frontages, landscape and lighting treatments are instrumental in promoting the qualities associated with "livable cities". Any future build-out scenarios should ensure that the balance of industrial, commercial, and residential development is directed to create a city that promotes business expansion while improving the community's quality of life.

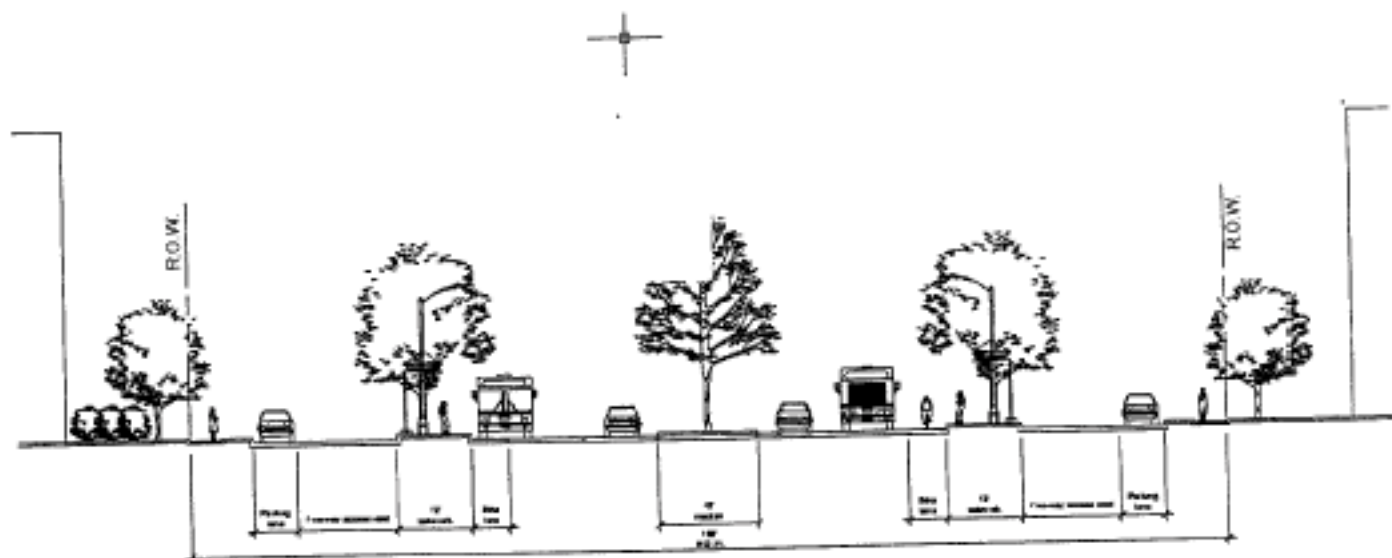


PICO RIVERA



Redesign of street type to match development type.

The case study in Pico Rivera focuses on the revitalization of an arterial highway through the use of streetscape enhancements and urban design recommendations. While Washington Boulevard is currently considered a commercial corridor, it has been dominated by a single industrial use for many years, and has served as a central spine for several adjacent residential neighborhoods. In addressing the different uses that occur along its length, the recommendations of the case study direct the transformation of an industrial thoroughfare to a mixed-use boulevard that reflects the character of its various land uses. Strategic redevelopment of the vacant industrial lands along the corridor is key to improving the character of the area. The recommendations show how sound urban design techniques can work with changing land use demands to improve the livable character of the corridor so that redevelopment of the Northrop Grumman site contributes to the successful revitalization of Washington Boulevard.



FUTURE ACTIONS

The recommendations contained in this report are intended as a demonstration of effective responses to the types of problems faced by the three case study cities. While these recommendations have been developed based on the physical and political realities of each situation, they are presented as alternatives to be explored, modified and developed further as needed by each community. Real change will not occur until the next step is taken: in order for any of these recommendations to become reality, each city must take specific actions in directing redevelopment efforts through policy tools such as Development Standards and Design Guidelines; assistance programs to help finance improvements; and targeted capital improvements. Some of the recommendations presented will need to be further developed in the form of master plans, specific plans and site plans that study site-specific issues. By using these examples as a foundation upon which to build their own specific solutions, the communities of the Gateway Region can work towards enhancing the quality of life and economic vitality of their own cities.

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